

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2715

INFO AMCONSUL ASMARA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 0888

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, ET

SUBJ: MENGISTU TAKES OVER AS HEAD OF STATE

1. PROVISIONAL MILITARY ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL ISSUED REVISED PROCLAMATION, DEFINING ORGANIZATION, POWERS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PMAC AND COUNCIL OF MINISTERS. PREVIOUS PMAC FIRST VICE CHAIRMAN LTC. MENGISTU HAILE-MARIAM HAS ASSUMED CHAIRMANSHIP AND TITLE OF HEAD OF STATE, WITH FORMER SECOND VICE CHAIRMAN ATNAFU ABATE BECOMING SOLE VICE CHAIRMAN. POSITION OF PMAC SECRETARY GENERAL, HELD UNTIL HIS EXECUTION LAST WEEK BY CAPT. ALEMAYEHU HAILE, HAS BEEN RETAINED IN NEW SETUP, BUT ANNOUNCEMENT DID NOT INDICATE WHO WILL FILL JOB. PMAC STRUCTURE ESTABLISHED 29 DEC 1976, CONSISTING OF CONGRESS OF WHOLE, CENTRAL COMMITTEE, AND STANDING COMMITTEE, HAS ALSO BEEN RETAINED, EXCEPT THAT COMPOSITION OF LATTER TWO BODIES HAS BEEN REDUCED TO 32 AND 16 MEMBERS RESPECTIVELY.

2. AS PART OF CHANGE, AUTHORITY OF PMAC CHAIRMAN POSITION HAS
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BEEN GREATLY INCREASED. MENGISTU APPARENTLY RETAINS HIS DUAL FUNCTION AS CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL OF MINISTERS. IN ADDITION, HE NOW BECOMES HEAD OF STATE AND COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF ARMED FORCES. HE WILL RECEIVE FOREIGN GUESTS, AMBASSADORS, AND DIPLOMATIC OFFICIALS, PRESIDE OVER ALL THREE PMAC BODIES, SUPERVISE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COUNTRY'S POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND SOCIAL POLICIES, MAKE APPOINTMENTS AND GIVE PROMOTIONS, AND "WILL TAKE MEASURES AGAINST

COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARIES AND ENEMIES OF PEOPLE. DETAILED ANALYSIS
OF STRUCTURE WILL FOLLOW SEPTTEL.

3. ACCORDING TO PRESS ACCOUNTS, PMAC STATEMENT CONTAINS PREAMBLE
WHICH POINTS OUT THAT, WHEREAS PURPOSE OF DECEMBER 29 PMAC
RESTRUCTURING WAS TO STRENGTHEN PMAC UNITY ALONG CLEAR POLITICAL
LINE, SO THAT MEMBERS INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY COULD
INTENSIFY REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS, SOME FIFTH COLUMNISTS
WITH RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER NEW SETUP UNSECCESFULLY TRIED TO USE
ARRANGEMENT TO PROMOTE COUNTERREVOLUTIONARY SCHEMES. DESPITE THIS,
PMAC HAD DECIDED TO ENDORSE NEW SETUP, AFTER MAKING AMENDMENTS
WITH VIEW TO STRENGTHENING DISCIPLINE AND ACCELERATING REVOLUTION-
ARY MARCH FORWARD. ONE COULD INFER FROM THIS LANGUAGE THAT MENGISTU
MAY STILL VIEW DEC 29 RESTRUCTURING AS POWER PLAY AGAINST HIM
AND THAT OTHERS STILL IN PMAC MAY HAVE TRIED TO SALVAGE WHAT THEY
COULD OF COLLECTIVE DECISION-MAKING STRUCTURE THAT DEC 29 FRAME-
WORK WAS DESIGNED TO CREATE.
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TAGS: PINT, PGOV, ET, (MENGISTU HAILE-MARIAM), (ATNAFU ABATE)
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